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Delano Intermediate School Newsletter









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May

June

9.....Gr. 5-6 choir concert, 7 p.m. 15.....Writers Workshop trip 15-17.....Grade 5 LLCC trip 20.....Grade 4 Track and Field Day, 8 to 11 a.m. 20.....Grade 5 Track and Field Day, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. 20.....School board mtg., 7 p.m. 21.....Grade 6 Track and Field Day, 8 to 11:30 a.m. 21.....Grade 4 U of M Science trip, 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. 21.....School board listening session, 7 p.m. 21....Gr. 5-6 band concert, 7 p.m. 24.....SpringFest Variety Show 28-29...Gr. 4 to Camp Friendship 31...Grade 6 to Science Museum

3	Grade 6 Wax Museum
4	Grade 6 flotillas project
5-7	Weather make-up days



Engineer in training

Students in the Engineering Club developed their skills with tools during construction of Rube Goldberg machines during Zero Hour on May 1. See Page 4 for more.

A wonderful year to learn

By Barry Voight Principal

Greetings, DIS families. As we move into the home stretch of our inaugural year, it is exciting to look back and celebrate the things we've accomplished and learned. It's also fun to look ahead and get an idea of our exciting vision for the future.

During the first ever open house back in August, I had the pleasure of welcoming all families to DIS for the first time. At that time, I encouraged all of us to "Embrace the Discovery," knowing that our school



Barry Voight

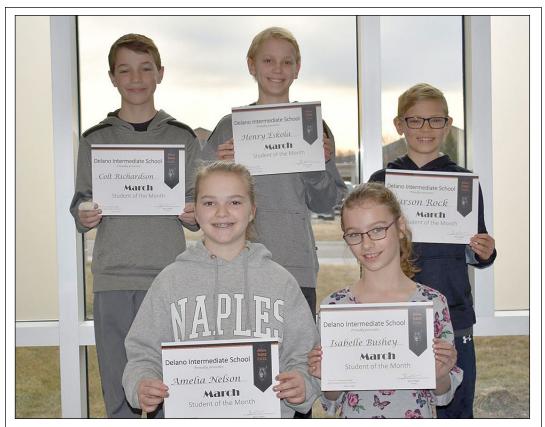
year would bring reasons to celebrate and obstacles to navigate. I promised everyone that evening that we wouldn't be

perfect but that we would keep working together to get it right, and to do better. I'm happy to say we've kept that promise, in both respects!

It has been a wonderful learning opportunity this year as staff have adapted to, and welcomed, new colleagues. Families have adapted to a new grade configuration across the district and the opening of new facilities. All of us at DIS, staff and students, have worked together to create "DIS Life."

Although the inaugural year is coming to a close, that

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Students of the Month

Delano Intermediate School recently named its Students of the Month for March. These students stood out because they were on time, prepared, respectful, took pride in their work, had good attendance and good grades, and went above and beyond what was expected. Those honored included fourth-graders Isabelle Bushey and Carson Rock, fifth-graders Abbie Pietila and Colt Richardson, and sixth-graders Amelia Nelson and Henry Eskola



Voight

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doesn't mean the excitement at DIS will wane anytime soon. New basketball hoops and a GaGa Ball pit are coming to the playspace, and we will be employing a slightly different scheduling technique for Zero Hour activities, allowing greater and more equitable access to the variety of activities we provide our students.

We are also making minor tweaks to our master schedule to ensure the greatest delivery of services possible.

Further, DIS staff are collectively excited about the literacy initiative that district administration, the Professional Development Committee and Q Comp have supported. This training will help us to develop a system-wide culture of literacy within our school so that we are better prepared to develop students' reading, listening, thinking and speaking skills across *all* disciplines.

Thank you for taking this journey with us as we learned and worked together in support of our students. We look forward to continued growth and success in the years to come!

Math tutors sought for 2019-20 at DIS

Delano Intermediate School is looking for math tutors to assist students during the 2019-20 school year.

In Minnesota, less than 60 percent of eighth-graders are proficient in math. You can make a difference by giving your time and talent to help students build their skills and confidence!

Tutors work with pairs of students during school hours throughout the school year. No matter if you're a recent grad, career changer, stay-at-home parent or retiree, you can make a great tutor.

No experience? No problem. Tutors receive great training, so they are well equipped to help



students grow.

Part-time and full-time positions are available. Tutors commit to serving 35, 25, or 18 hours a week throughout the school year. Opportunities begin in August 2019.

Perks for tutors

- Build your skills, network, and resume.
- Receive a paid stipend every two weeks.
- Earn up to \$4,200 for college tuition or student loans. Tutors 55 and older may gift

In Minnesota, less than 60 percent of eighth-graders are proficient in math.

the award to their child, grandchild, stepchild or foster child.

 Free health insurance and child care assistance for those who qualify.

Ready to be the change for struggling students? Learn more at ReadingAndMath.net.

Questions can be sent to join@servetogrow.org, or call 866.859.2825.

Standouts

DIS students Evelyn Olberding, MaryBeth Redinger, and Lauren Black were selected to participate in the Celebration of Young Musicians Festival Choir held Saturday, April 13, at Rockford High School. They joined top singers from the region for a day of singing and learning. The Rockford festival was one of four sites in the state to host this event for the Minnesota Music Educators Association. Congratulations to these singers for representing Delano so well.



Writers hone creative skills in workshop

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

From song lyrics to essays, and from spooky stories to humor, 35 fourth-graders at DIS honed their composition skills through the Writers Workshop program earlier this year.

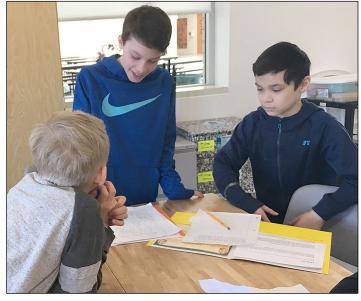
"It was really fun because you got to be with your friends and discuss fun ways to write different stories. Sometimes they would be goofy, sometimes they'd be serious," said Kimmy Rogers, one of the participating students.

Students in third and fourth grade were chosen for the program by their teachers, then had the option to participate.

"It was fun last year so I thought it would be fun this year, and it was," said Alex Ihde, explaining why he was willing to take on extra school assignments. "I loved it because it was a big learning experience. I didn't know so many types of stories existed."

The eight-week program began in January and ended in March, with all 65 participating students across third and fourth grade contributing one of their works to a final anthology. During each week students had a new assignment to stretch and develop their creativity.

"Each week would be a different topic," said Gifted and Talented Coordinator Gwen Briesemeister, who oversaw



Writers Workshop participants discuss their projects during the program.

the fourth-grade group. "One week they would try to develop comedy by overusing a word in their writing. Another project was to look at certain books and then try to model the same patterns the author was using. They also did songwriting. We generally tried to do something more obscure that they don't normally do in their classes."

Rogers said her favorite assignment was free writing for the first assignment, and Ihde said he enjoyed building a story based off a picture.

Each week the writers returned with their completed assignment and met in small groups to share their work and practice giving suggestions to one another. After completing all of the assignments, students chose one to put through the full editing process, type up and submit for the anthology.

"We also had a high school advanced language arts class read all their stories and then give them feedback and comments," said Briesemeister. "They gave the kids award stickers for some of the best stories. A lot of those high school kids had been in Writers Workshop when they were in third and fourth grade. It kind of came full circle for them."

What was the most difficult aspect of the program for the young authors?

"Coming up with stories was

probably the hardest part," said Ihde, adding that the students sometimes used story randomizer websites to help.

"And Ms. Briesemeister is a great teacher. If you don't know what you should write about she's right there to give suggestions," said Rogers.

Pushing through challenges helped students develop their skills, and they have already noticed the benefit in their other classes.

"When I have to come up with sentences for spelling it helps me in making up stuff," said Rogers. "And it will help us in the future. When we get older, if we need to write a story or describe stuff it will help us with organizing it and making sure it's all right and that it's not off topic."

Now that the anthology was completed in April, just one highlight of the program remains: a trip to the College of St. Benedict for the Young Authors, Young Artists Conference in May.

"There is a keynote speaker, and they get to choose to go to three different breakout sessions on writing and illustrating and storytelling," said Briesemeister. "There are actual artists who have books for sale. It's pretty exciting for them to be on campus. They love that."

"We went last year and it was so much fun," said Rogers. "I'm really excited to go again."







Zero Hour

A tour through DIS during Zero Hour on May 1 revealed Engineer Club students building complex machines for simple jobs, art students working on projects of their choice, Math Club students building an amusement park on a grid, and Coding Club students wording on a Star Wars themed project.



Survey feedback will provide guidance

By Paul DownerCommunications Coordinator

Earlier this school year Delano Public Schools conducted a survey of students, staff and families to gather input about school climate and the strategic plan.

The Panorama survey was conducted from Nov. 19 through Dec. 7, 2018, and asked participants to weigh in on topics like student-staff relationships, perceptions about safety, student engagement, and more.

"We appreciate everyone who took the time to respond to this survey," said Superintendent Matt Schoen. "The feedback provided will help us make informed decisions regarding our strategic plan and our daily efforts toward continuous improvement."

Although certain segments of the school community have been surveyed periodically for specific purposes, it had been several years since a general district-wide survey was conducted. Similar surveys will take place in the future to give constituents a consistent opportunity to provide feedback and to allow the district to identify themes.

Strong relationships

About 92 percent of Delano students in grades 3-12 responded to the survey that asked questions related to school climate.

One highlight was that students generally feel they have good relationships with their teachers. In grades three through five, 78 percent of students said they had positive relationships. In grades six through 12, 82 percent of students said they felt respected by their teachers.

That rapport extended to teachers and families, with 71 percent of teachers reporting that they have positive relationships with the families of their students.

Parents and guardians also

reported an extensive level of support for their students in the home, with more than 70 percent saying they talk with their children about class activities, help them understand content, know their child's friends well and help their children learn to do things for themselves.

Safety and climate

Delano students tend to feel safer in school than their peers around the nation.

Seventy-four percent of students in grades three through five responded favorably when asked if they felt safe at school, and 66 percent of students in grades six through 12 also replied favorably. Both numbers were about 10 percent higher than average national results.

Family responses were consistent with student safety perceptions, with 68 percent replying favorably.

In terms of overall school climate, about 75 percent of students in grades six through 12 said their school was characterized by positive or neutral energy rather than a negative atmosphere.

One key to positive energy, of course, is confident and competent staff members. Nearly 80 percent of teachers responded in a positive fashion to questions about perceptions of their own professional strengths and areas for growth.

Areas to grow

At all levels of the district, school officials would like to see higher numbers in the area of student engagement. Survey questions asked students if they were excited about going to class and what they learned there, if they were excited to participate, and if they talked about ideas from their classes outside of class time.

In grades three through five, 54 percent of students responded favorably, but in grades six

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Masters in math

The fifth-grade Math Masters recently competed at the regional tournament in Hutchinson, earning a fourth-place finish out of 21 teams. In addition to the strong team showing, individual awards went to Luke Gilliland, Dylan Bekkala, Carter VanBeusekom and Michael Atwood.



Save the track dates

Families are encouraged to save the following dates for the DIS track and field days. Fourth-graders will enjoy their track day from 8 to 11 a.m. on Monday, May 20. Fifth grade will follow the same day from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Sixth-graders will run from 8 to 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 21. Spectators are welcome, and volunteer opportunities are available. Contact volcoord@delanoschools.org for information.



Time to consider signing up for band

By Mike Dailey Band Director

Students interested in joining band in fifth grade, and their families, should keep the upcoming activities in mind.

End of April/early May

All fourth-graders will see a band instrument demonstration. At this demonstration they will see the various musical instruments that are options for them to play next year in band.

After the demonstration, each student will have a signup sheet on which they can indicate their top two choices of instrument if they participate in band.

May 9-10

Students will test instruments during school. The students will bring the form they filled out during the demonstration and have the opportunity to test their top two (or possibly more) choices. Eckroth music will have professionals there to see where the students' strengths are and to guide them to the best instrument choice for them.

Percussion

We start a maximum of six percussion students each year. I will evaluate any student that wants to be in percussion after



Students should consider whether or not they would like to be in band, and take part in preparatory activities in the coming weeks. Above, new band students participate in the free band camp last August.

school on Thursday or Friday, May 9-10, or Monday, May 13. The evaluations will take five to 10 minutes per student.

I will do the evaluations on a first-come first-serve basis starting at 3:15 p.m. each day in the intermediate school music room. We would like percussion students to have two years of formal piano lessons to help play the mallet instruments.

The evaluations will consist of rhythm reading, rhythm matching, tempo matching, note naming, a bell piece and a major scale. All materials will be provided. Please email me what day your student is planning to try out at mike.dailey@delanoschools.org.

Sign-up night

Wednesday, May 15, is the official sign-up night for the fifth-grade band of 2019-20! I will have two brief informational parent meetings in the intermediate school music room. The meetings will be at 4:30 and 6 p.m.

After the meeting you can sign your child up for band and, if needed, rent an instrument and/or buy supplies from Eckroth Music.

Signing up for band is, of course, optional. All students wishing to join the band must

have an instrument that works well. To facilitate this, Eckroth Music will rent instruments and will also have someone at the sign-up night who can inspect an instrument you may already have.

What students need

All students participating in band will need a quality working instrument, lesson book ("Traditions of Excellence Book 1"), oils or cleaning supplies for their instrument and a music stand.

Percussionists will need one additional book: "Alfred Drum Method Book 1."

Free band camp

A free band camp is scheduled for Aug. 19-22 in the intermediate school music room. Sections will meet together Monday through Thursday each day to learn all of the basics and to get started before the first day of school.

• Flutes and oboes (8-8:45 a.m.), clarinets (8:45-9:30), sax-ophones (9:30-10:15), trumpets and French horns (10:15-11), trombones and baritones (11:15-noon) and percussion (noon to 12:45 p.m.)

Please add the camp dates to your calendar and make every effort to get your students there. This camp is a huge advantage for the students that attend!

Survey

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through 12 only 23 percent responded favorably.

"We are confident that increased staff collaboration and student data analysis will increase student engagement," said Director of Teaching and Learning Joe Vieau, adding that an ongoing shift in classroom instruction from an emphasis on lecture formats to class dis-

cussions, small group work and self-selected projects will foster more active learners.

Although few visitors to school events and activities such as Homecoming would question students' sense of belonging in grades six through 12, district officials saw room for improvement.

"We'll keep an eye on those numbers in future surveys, but in everyday observation there does seem to be a strong sense of school spirit," said Vieau.

Strategic plan feedback

There were 206 responses from parents about how effective the four main pillars of the strategic plan have been: facilities: curriculum, professional development and technology.

In facilities, 89 percent either agreed or strongly agreed that the plan was working well, a positive sign as the district's largest ever building project came to completion.

In curriculum, 77 percent either agreed of strongly agreed

that the plan was on target. In professional development, 80 percent agreed or strongly agreed, and in technology 86 percent either agreed or strongly agreed.

"We are pleased to see that our families believe our strategic plan has been effective since it was established in 2013," said Schoen. "We are currently updating the plan to create a roadmap for the next five years as we continue our pursuit of educational excellence."

Announcements

District earns finance award

In recognition of its sound fiscal health and timely, accurate financial reporting, Delano Public Schools has received the School Finance Award from the Minnesota Department of Education.

Delano has been a regular recipient of the award, and MDE's School Finance Division announced its 2019 list of award winners for the previous fiscal year in April.

To qualify for the award, the district submitted its financial data in a timely manner and in compliance with state law, exhibited fiscal health in a variety of fund balance categories, and maintained accuracy in its financial reporting, completing the report with no errors.

Weather make-up days

Extreme weather has resulted in the cancellation of five school days this year, and make-up days will be in effect. Dates when school was canceled due to weather included Jan. 29-31, Feb. 20 and April 11.

Make-up days set before the beginning of the school year included Monday, Feb. 18, and Monday, April 22. In addition, three days have been added to the end of the school year, so class will be in session through Friday, June 7.

Additional days will be added to the end of the school year, if necessary, during the remainder of the year.

A sixth canceled day that will not be made up, due to highly unusual circumstances, is the Feb. 8 closure due to a heating problem in the high school. Staff members did report for work that day.

Notify school of address changes

Moving? Changing schools? If your family is moving out of the school district, whether or not your students will continue attending Delano Public Schools next year, please notify the DES office at 763-972-6200 for DES, 763-972-7602 for DIS, or 763-972-7601 for DHS. This information is vital for class assignments and staffing needs for the 2019-20 school year.

Watch year-end meal balances

Beginning Tuesday, May 28, and continuing through the end of the year, students will not be allowed to purchase a lunch or breakfast if their meal account has a negative balance. Any unpaid lunch balances will be placed for collections.

Account deposits must be turned in to the office by 10 a.m. to

be recorded by lunch time the same day. To check your current account balance, you can log in to Family Access on the Delano Public Schools website (www.delano.k12.mn.us) and click on Food Service.

Contact Tracie Erickson with questions or concerns at 763.972.3365 ext. 1917 or tracie.erickson@delanoschools.org.

Food assistance offered

The Sheridan Story is a non-profit organization that provides free food for students over the weekend. Their focus is to help fill in food "gaps" -- the times when children are not at school to access meal programs. Students participating in The Sheridan Story program will receive a bag of food that will be discreetly placed in their locker every Friday before leaving school.

If you are interested in participating in The Sheridan Story program, please fill out the enrollment form at bit.ly/SheridanFood.

If you have further questions about the program or need another permission slip (slips were originally sent home with students on Feb. 19), contact DIS School Social Worker Nicole Gohman at 763.972.7602 ext. 1515 or nicole.gohman@delanoschools.org.

There is no criteria to participate in The Sheridan Story, and all information is kept confidential. For information regarding the Sheridan Story please visit: www.thesheridanstory.org.

County seeking foster families

Wright County is seeking foster families who will allow children experiencing difficult situations to remain in their school.

"We try to keep foster children in their current school district to allow for more stability in their already unstable lives," said Wright County Case Aide Valerie Steele. "We are trying to reach every community to help spread the word about the need of additional foster parents in each Wright County city."

Wright County has a pressing and ongoing need for foster families. All children need a safe home where people will nurture and respect them. Children enter foster care due to significant life factors, often including abuse or neglect. The overall goal of foster care is to provide children with a temporary, stable and caring family setting until they are reunited with their family or until a permanency plan is established for them.

If you would like more information about becoming a foster parent, contact Marisa Ferguson at 763-682-7484 or marisa.ferguson@co.wright.mn.us.

Executive Functioning Skills

Learning to keep emotions under control

Emotional control, often referred to as emotional regulation, is the ability to manage one's emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control and direct behavior.

A student with this skill is able to recover from a disappointment in a short time. Emotional control in older students allows them to manage the anxiety of an upcoming stressful event (i.e. game or test) and still perform.

A normal school day offers a multitude of opportunities for students to practice their emotional regulation skills. These opportunities could be an upcoming test, a conflict at lunch or recess, or a bad grade on an assignment.

A student's ability to handle these stressors in healthy ways will enable them to de-escalate the situations and learn from them. Poor regulation of emotions often leads to worsening of the situation and other negative consequences.

In the classroom and at home

How can we develop it in the classroom and at home?

The most effective strategy for developing a student's emotional regulation is to ask questions and practice coping strategies when the student is calm and under control. Students often know how to handle difficult situations when not in the midst of them. It is much harder for students to utilize the skills they've learned when presented with an upsetting situation.

Students must be able to recognize the clues their body gives them when experiencing different emotions. For

Impulse Control

The capacity to think before you act; the ability to resist the urge to say or do something that allows us the time to evaluate a situation and how our behavior might impact it.

Working Memory

The ability to hold information in memory while performing complex tasks. It incorporates the ability to draw on past learning or experience to apply to the the situation at hand or to project into the future.

Emotional Control

The ability to manage emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control and direct behavior.

Flexibility

The ability to revise plans in the face of obstacles, setbacks, new information or mistakes. It relates to an adaptability to changing conditions.

Sustained Attention

The capacity to maintain attention to a situation or task in spite of distractibility, fatigue, or boredom.

Task Initiation

The ability to begin projects without undue procrastination in an efficient or timely fashion.

Planning/Prioritization

The ability to create a roadmap to reach a goal or to complete a task. It also involves being able to make decisions about what's important to focus on and what's not important.

Organization

The ability to create and maintain systems to keep track of information

Time Management

The capacity to estimate how much time one has, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits and deadlines. It also involves a sense that time is important.

Goal-Directed Persistence

The capacity to have a goal, follow through to the completion of the goal and not be put off or distracted by competing interests.

Self-Monitoring (Metacognition)

The ability to take a step back and

take a bird's eye view of oneself in a situation - to observe how you problem solve. It includes self monitoring and self-evaluation.

example, when a student is angry, they may experience a racing heart, a warm face and tense muscles. Once students can recognize these "warning signs," they are more likely to be able to implement a calming strategy because they understand a calming strategy is needed when their body gives them these clues. It is essential that students are able to identify what clues their bodies give them given a variety of emotions.

For younger students, it is advantageous to reduce or eliminate triggers when possible. It is also helpful to review expectations in advance of a potentially stressful situation. Young students often have difficulty identifying or labeling their emotions; helping them

do so will enable them to take the appropriate steps to gain control.

Once students can identify their feelings and recognize their body clues, it is important to explore problems and reactions. Many students have large reactions to small problems. They must practice matching the size of their reaction to the size of their problem. You can help your student learn to match the size of their reaction to the size of their problem by giving them examples of problems and reactions and talking about which ones match together.

Adults can implement the following to help support the emotional regulation of students: model calm behavior, model the calming strategies

that you want them to use, use positive reinforcement, and have items available to help your child calm their bodies and minds (fidgets, weighted blanket, music, sensory items such as kinetic sand, art supplies, etc).

The easiest and most effective strategies in helping students cope through intense emotions are deep breathing, positive self-talk, journaling, taking a break, and physical movement. It is essential that students practice calming strategies when they are calm in order to be able to implement them during times of stress.

• For more resources on executive functioning skills, visit the DIS collection at bit.ly/EFSatDIS.



This e-newsletter is published by District Communications Coordinator Paul Downer. Contact Paul at 763.972.3365, x1911, or paul.downer@delanoschools.org.



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